Mr. George Herman
CBS News
2020 M St., NW
Washington, D.C. 20036

1/12/82

Dear George,

In the Post's Style section story on Mike Wallace yesterday there was mention of a Martin Phillips as his producer. I think he was here years ago when he was working on an assassination story. If he is the one I'd like to get in touch with him. Here's why.

I'd just started to work on a story I intended to try to sell to a magazine when I was interrupted by the need to prepare an affidavit in one of the many FOIA cases. I've not completed it yet. Despite the general attitude toward such stories, this one is fairly simple and quite provocative. If 60 Minutes got interested it would do ever so much more good than any magazine piece.

By way of background, in my first book I have a chapter titled "The Oswalds' Government Relations." There is much, most not known to most media people, that does raise substantial questions about the possibility of Lee's having had special connections. The Warren Commission went into a tizzy when it was reported that he had been an FBI informer. I don't know if he was or wasn't.

When I was pushing my second book, on an Oakland, Calif. talk show after midnight 12/15/66, a caller who was uneasy on the air told me that the Oswald I described was not at all like the Oswald he's been friends with in the Marines. Because he was uneasy and unwilling to identify himself I asked him to hold the phone for about 15 minutes, until the show ended, when we could speak privately. He then told me much that I had not found in any Commission records but, surprisingly, I was able to confirm on my own, particularly in New Orleans.

What interested me most was his statement that Oswald had both Top Secret and Crypto clearances, that he had Top Secret because his work required Crypto. At that time I'd never heard of crypto clearance.

When I got home I combed all the information available. I found two kinds of confirmation in Warren Commission testimony, the more important being that of the commissioned officer under whom Oswald operated special and then quite secret radar. The Commission ignored it but he testified that to hold that job Oswald required at least a secret clearance.

The Marine Corp provided the Commission with no such record. Eventually it provided a record showing Oswald did have a Confidential clearance, in itself surprising for a Marine who got Communist literature openly in the mail and to the knowledge of his superiors.

As best I could I've been pursuing this for years under FOIA. I now have proof that Oswald did have this crypto clearance, a Marine Corp record pertaining to an entirely different matter, also ignored by the Commission once it started looking into it. This is to say that the record I've obtained is one I did not find in the Commission's records but it should be there because it made the same inquiry of the Navy.

So, the accused Presidential assassin had a Crypto and Top Secret status and no investigating body reported it, particularly not the Presidential Commission appointed to investigate the crime and Oswald.

When Oswald defected, if that is what he did, and the Chief of Staff of the Navy provided what one supposes is all pertinent information to the Moscow Embassy, the cable says explicitly that the records reflect no security clearance but it is possible he had Confidential.

The day of the assassination the FBI started checking the Navy records on Oswald. I have their report now. It says no security clearance.

Strange when without any doubt at all he was Crypto/Top Secret and had been involved in a number of spooky operations, including against Sukarno.

If you know Phillips, who may remember me, and he might be interested, I can provide many more details and an adequate number of official records not all indicated above.

I'm home most of the time but most mornings I drive to a nearby mall for a couple of hours of walking where the cold that is a no-no is not a problem. I can walk a few minutes, sit, and then walk again. The only other times I'm not home is when I have local errands to do, medical appointments, etc. For the next couple of weeks my wife will be home except when she goes to the doctor because she is recovering from a sprained ankle. So I'll get any message.

Thanks and best wishes,

Sincerely,

301/473-8186

Harold Weisberg